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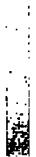
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# INGERSOLLISM.



—I have always been strongly in favor of secular education in the sense of education without theology; but I must confess I have been no less seriously perplexed to know by what practical measures the religious feeling, which is the essential basis of conduct, was to be kept up in the present utterly chaotic state of opinion on these matters, without the use of the Bible.—*Huxley.*



# INGERSOLLISM:

FROM A SECULAR POINT OF VIEW.

## A L E C T U R E

DELIVERED IN

ASSOCIATION HALL, NEW YORK; MUSIC HALL, BOSTON; IN PHILADELPHIA, CHICAGO, ST. LOUIS, AND IN OVER SIX HUNDRED OF THE PRINCIPAL LECTURE COURSES OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

BY

GEORGE R. WENDLING.

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*There is more power for the public safety in the whispered utterances of a God-fearing priest or preacher than in all your batteries and iron-clads.*

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CHICAGO:  
JANSEN, McCLURG & COMPANY.

1883.

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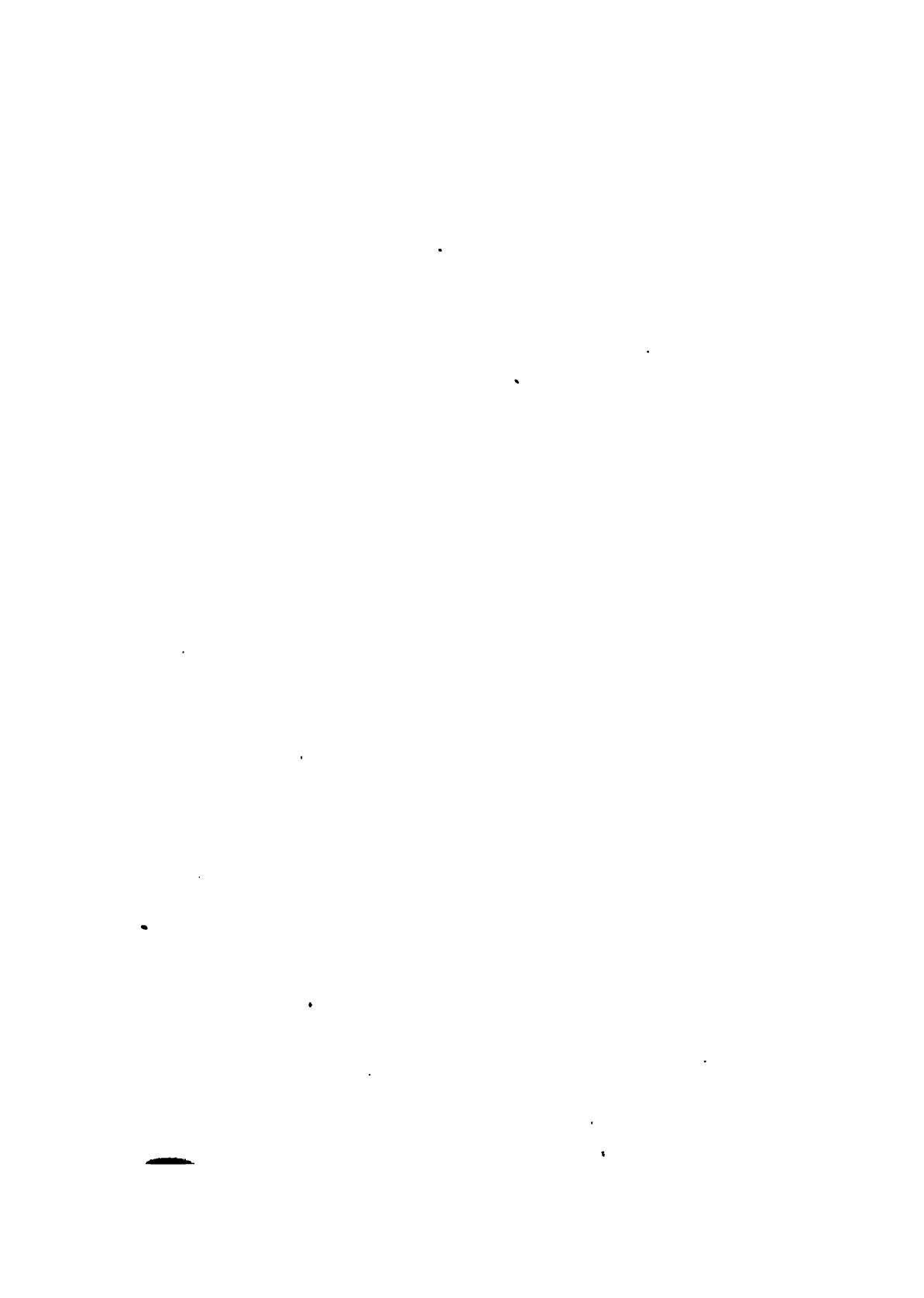
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DEDICATED  
TO  
JOSEPHINE E. WENDLING,

THE QUEEN OF MY HOME,

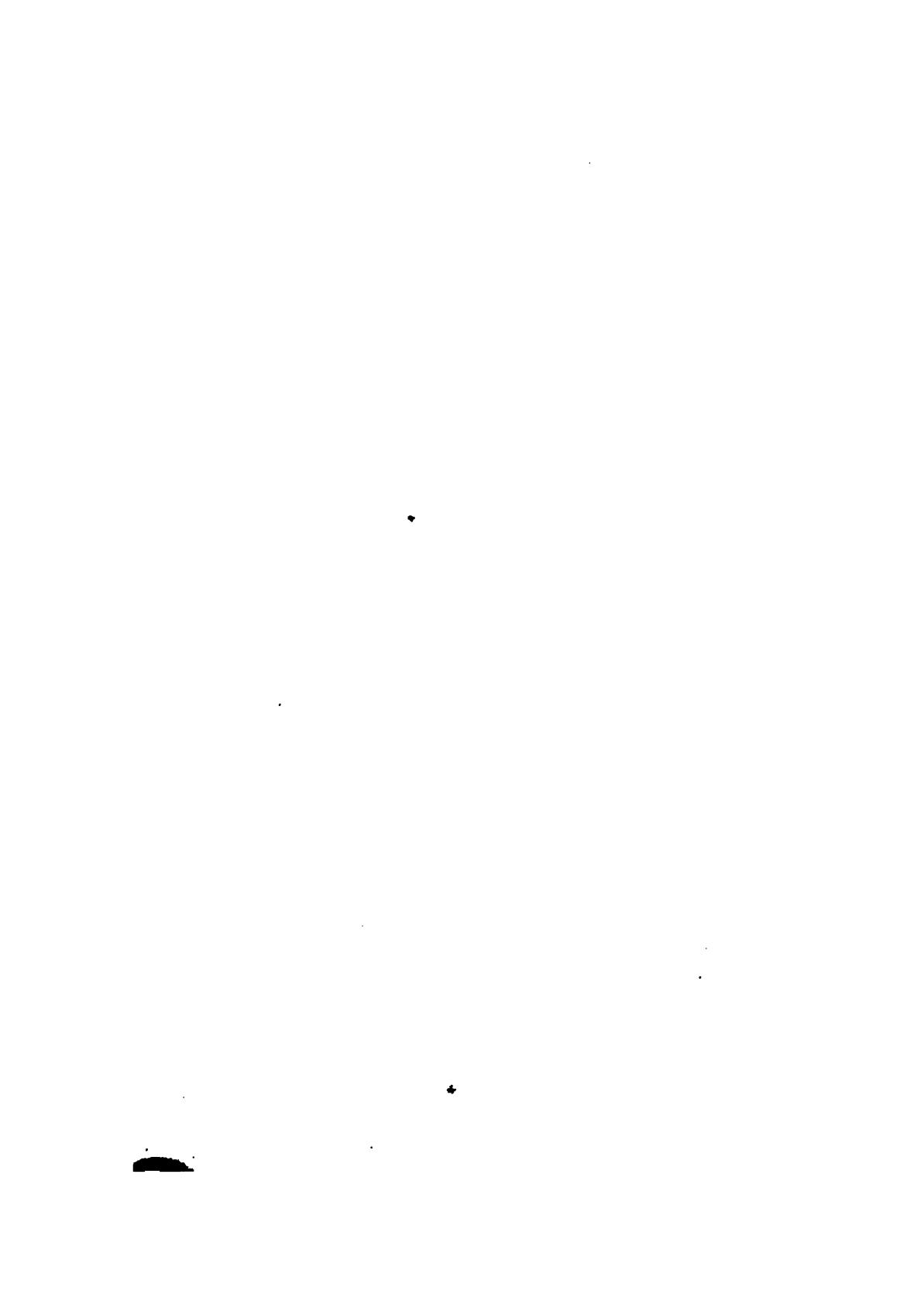
A PERFECT WIFE AND A PERFECT MOTHER.



—I am not a sad man. Spite of the experience of life—somewhat bitter—I am a cheerful, and joyous, and happy man. But take away my consciousness of God; let me believe there is no Infinite God; no infinite mind which thought the world into existence and thinks it into continuance; no infinite Conscience which everlastinglly enacts the eternal laws of the universe; no infinite Affection which loves the world; loves Abel and Cain—loves the drunkard's wife and the drunkard; the Mayors and Aldermen who made the drunkard; which loves the victim of the tyrant, and loves the tyrant; loves the slave and his master; loves the murdered and the murderer; the fugitive and the kidnapper; that there is no God who watches over the nation, but “forsaken Israel wanders lone”; that the sad people of Europe, Africa, America, have no guardian—then I should be sadder than Egyptian night.—*Theodore Parker.*



—The battle-ground of atheism is not in the field of natural science; meaning by that the study of material phenomena. The argument from design to an intelligent contriver does not require the knowledge of a Cuvier or Humboldt to make it satisfactory. Every man carries about with him in his own organization a syllogism which all the logic in the world can never mend. If his skepticism will not melt away in such an ocean of evidence, it is because it is insoluble.—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*



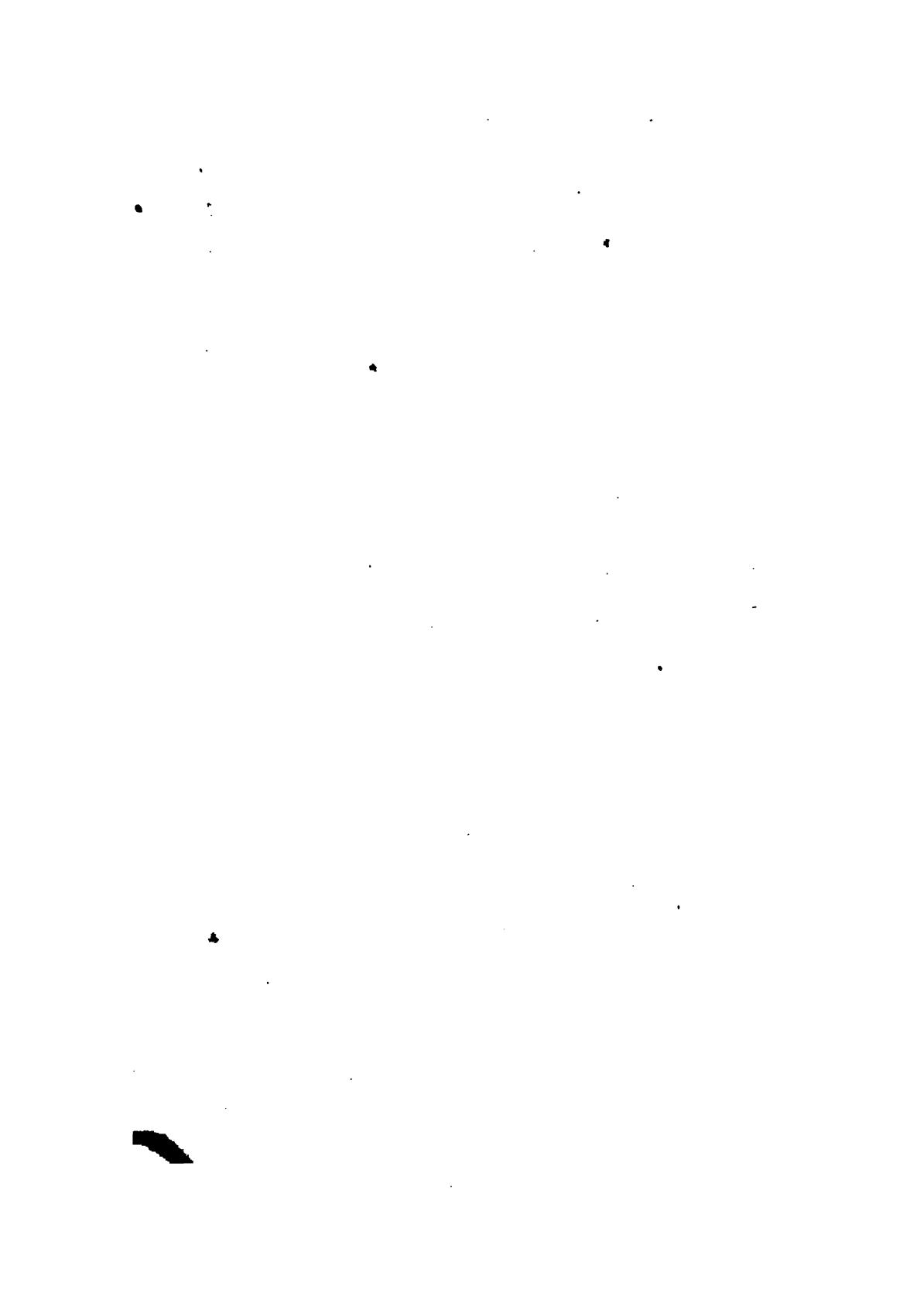
—There has never been a State of Atheists. If you wander over the earth you may find cities without walls, without king, without mint, without theatre or gymnasium, but you will never find a city without God, without prayer, without oracle, without sacrifice. Sooner may a city stand without foundations, than a State without belief in the Gods.—*Plutarch.*



—I have consulted our philosophers, I have perused their books, I have examined their several opinions, I have found them all proud, positive and dogmatical, even in their pretended skepticism; knowing everything, proving nothing, and ridiculing one another.—*Rousseau.*



—I would fain ask a minute philosopher what good he proposes to mankind by his doctrines? Will they make a man a better citizen or father of a family? a more endearing husband, friend, or son? Will they enlarge his public or private virtues, or correct any of his frailties or vices? What is there either joyful or glorious in such opinions? Do they either refresh or enlarge our thoughts? Do they contribute to the happiness or raise the dignity of human nature? The only good that I have ever heard pretended to is, that they banish terrors and set the mind at ease. But whose terrors do they banish? Those of impenitent criminals and malefactors, and which, to the good of mankind, should be in perpetual terror and alarm.—*Sir R. Steele: Tatler.*



## NOTE.

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I PERMIT the publication of this lecture in book form for the simple reason that by many people in many parts of the country I have often been requested to do so.

My own opinion is that certain qualities—great earnestness, for example—which entered into the delivery of the lecture, but cannot be exhibited on the printed page, will largely account for the many commendatory words the lecture has received. A good delivery (if you please) of very poor matter sometimes blinds the judgment of a very acute critic. I am not vain enough to believe for a moment that the calm judgment of my critics will find in the printed lecture grounds for the unusual praise awarded to the lecture on the platform.

I am sure of but one thing about the matter: I am right—Ingersoll is wrong. My methods, my re-statements of old arguments, my illustrations, my rhetoric, may all be lamentably weak, but the ideas which I seek to present are invincibly strong.

I hope the lecture will do good in this form.

I have often been asked to tell the amount of the largest fee I ever received for the delivery of a lecture. I think the very largest reward any lecturer ever received was the one I got not long since. Some one sent me, one day after I had lectured in Pittsburgh, a copy of the "Daily Commercial Gazette," of that city. The following paragraph in the paper was marked:

OBITUARY.—William Lewis, a young man of great promise, died after a brief illness at his home in the Thirty-fifth ward, Sabbath night, from an attack of pneumonia, which only lasted a few days. His death is profoundly lamented by a large host of young friends. His character was irreproachable. A singular incident is noted in connection with the sad affair. The deceased, though a young man of fine moral character, had honest doubts as to the reality of the Christian faith, but he was a sincere and candid seeker after light. He had read much on the subject, and gave a hearing to both sides. On the Monday evening when Hon. Geo. R. Wendling lectured, he, with some friends, came over to hear that gentleman, and after the lecture said he had become convinced of the truth of Christianity, and henceforth he would pin his faith to that belief. His convictions on the subject were clear, and during the few remaining days of his life he was earnest, though modest, in expressing his new faith, and in accepting it.

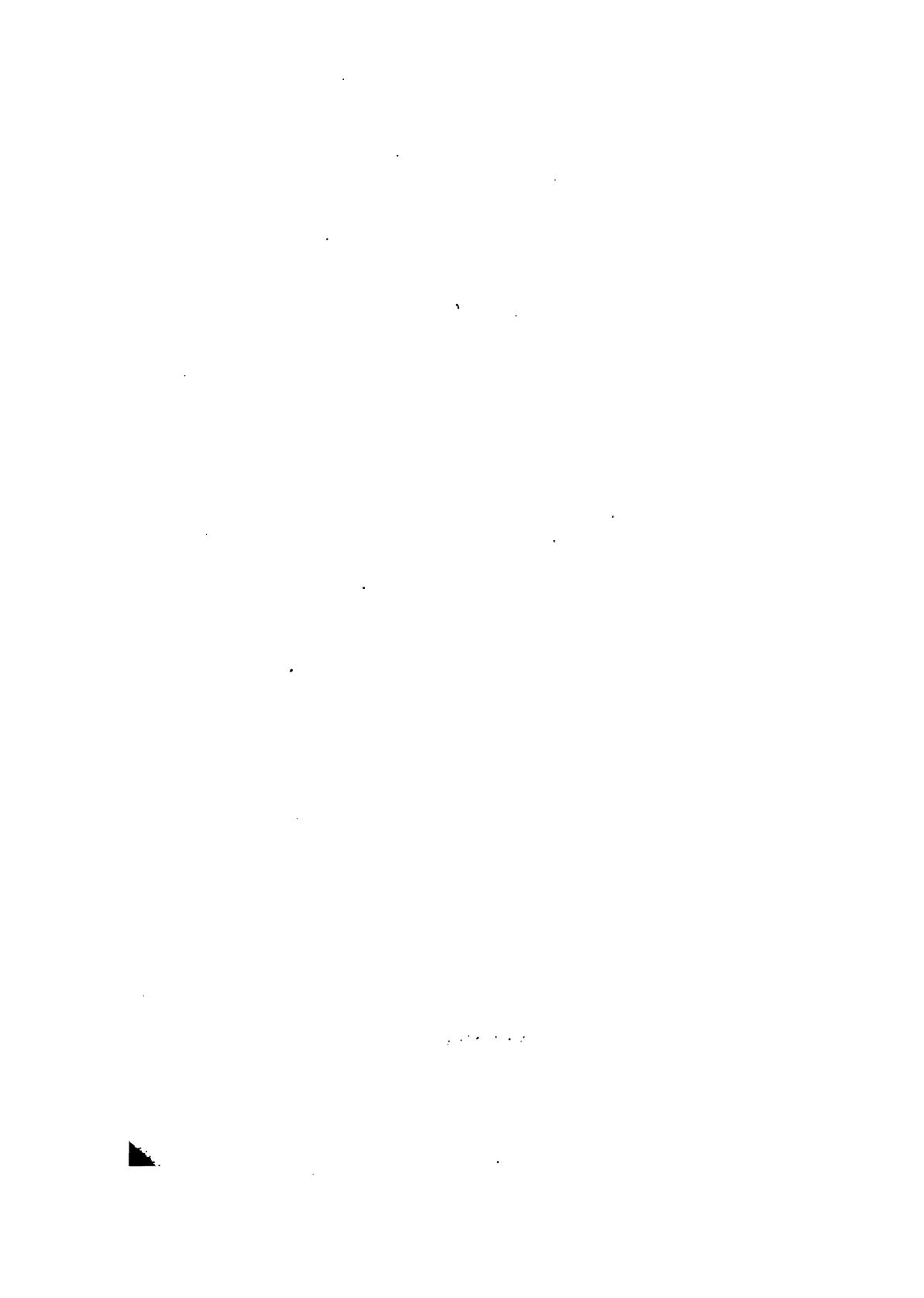
Now I am neither a preacher nor the son of a preacher. I do not even know whether I am orthodox or not. I have never cared to know. I doubt if there be much practical piety about me. But I have learned that that paragraph is true; and, being true, I call it the greatest fee I ever received.

If the gentlemen who compose the famous publishing house which sets its imprint hereon can apprise me some day of another such incident, I shall regard the publication of the lecture in book form under their auspices as "a success," despite its manifold faults and blemishes.

G. R. W.

BLOOMINGTON, ILL.





INGERSOLLISM:  
FROM  
A SECULAR POINT OF VIEW.

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THE Decalogue—the solitary autograph  
of the Eternal—is not a mistake.

On the plains of Sinai have perished iconoclasts without number, in the ineffectual attempt to supplant that Decalogue with the ever shifting dictates of Reason.

When Human Reason—a bright and glorious goddess—shall add to that Decalogue one line, or take one line from it, I will yield to her the exclusive homage of my heart and brain.

He of Nazareth, with His divine wisdom, might say it, but Human Reason has tried in



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vain for five thousand years to say—A new commandment I give unto you.

Yet if Robert Ingersoll be right, every man makes his own God, and aside from that we cannot know that there is a God; Christ was at the best an enthusiast; the Bible is a curse; religion a conscious or unconscious sham; a future reckoning a chimera; and immortality perhaps a fancy.

This is Ingersollism in its nude state, in its primordial nakedness—stripped of its gorgeous and glowing raiment, its rhetorical drapery. It is a very ancient thing, but the magnificent and unique genius of its modern sponsor entitles it to a modern and unique name.

Before we go further allow me another preliminary word. I have learned something in the West of the private life of the gentleman whose views I condemn, whose name fur-

nishes forth the title of this lecture. I not only honor his abilities, but I also respect his personal character. Thus at the beginning, with these words of sincere and just compliment, let us have done at once and forever with all personalities. If any one has come to listen to personal detraction of Robert Ingersoll, he has come to be disappointed. If any one comes to be amused, he too has come to be disappointed, for I have come to speak seriously upon very grave subjects.

Let me detain you at the threshold one moment longer. You and I will stand toward each other upon a footing I much prefer, if you will at once dismiss the impressions created by the far too friendly and partial words which have announced this lecture. Put aside all thought of the graces, arts, and effects of oratory. I pretend to nothing but a plain and earnest discussion of the great questions

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which lie before us now, nor shall I in that discussion sacrifice strength for novelty, by ignoring arguments older than myself—arguments which have stood the tests of time. I am here, not to challenge your criticism, but to invoke your serious attention.

We go now to our theme.

I have defined, or rather I have summarized, Ingersollism, fairly I think, without an exaggerating tint or a shadow of misrepresentation. In my judgment, these doctrines called Ingersollism seriously affect our social and political structures as well as our religious institutions. I conceive that the inevitable consequences, business and political, of such teachings are of the gravest importance to every citizen. I speak, therefore, as a citizen, as a business man, as a lawyer, and, if you please, as a politician—discarding the narrow meaning of that word; and as such,

would speak to men of every faith and calling. I would speak as a "Man of the World," as the churches say, and I would address myself to men of the world, upon the business, social, and political phases of the teachings Ingersoll forces upon our attention. I champion no creed nor sect. I place humanity above all the creeds of the creed-builders, and my country above all political and religious partizanship.

Looking at the subject now from the point of view we have taken, very practical thoughts at once suggest themselves. There is an important question of political economy involved in this whole religious controversy. I turn from the pages of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Professor Bowen, and say that if the elementary teachings of political economy be true, and Ingersoll and his followers be right, every church spire in the land is a monument of

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financial stupidity, every pulpit a bad investment. We must go further still. We must transform our places of worship into warehouses and workshops, stop every religious press, put stocks of merchandise or steam engines and spindles into all church buildings, convert our priests into pedagogues, our theological students into students of medicine, and our great preachers into politicians. Consider the effect upon "the balance of trade," our "table of exports," if these millions of men and money be driven into channels of productive industry. Take the footings of our last census.\* Sixty-three thousand church edifices and twenty-one million five hundred thousand church sittings in the United States! Three hundred and fifty-four millions of dollars invested in property devoted to the purposes of religion! Five times as many men

\* The Census of 1870.

consecrating their lives to the cause of religion as may be found in our standing army! Consider the details, infinite in number, variety, and expense, from an international or quadrennial or ecumenical council, conference, or synod, down to a mid-week prayer-meeting. In your calculations, include the fact that almost the entire number of our fifty millions suspend all remunerative employment once a week and sacrifice fifty-two days every year! Why, free trade, the remonetization of silver, the resumption of specie payments, the continuance of the national banking system, and our schemes for river and harbor improvements, are all mere bagatelles when compared with the practical question these facts involve!

I put this phase of Ingersollism before you as bankers, merchants, tradesmen, professional men, and laborers of all kinds, because the

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facts involved therein bear directly and most powerfully upon your financial interests, and because, having met more than one dishonest man calling himself religious, many of us lend willing ears to Ingersoll's destructive fallacies. Before I have done I shall more than once recur to this financial and practical phase of Ingersollism; but let us now rise for a while above the dollar view, and inquire if in the domain of history, science, or reason, he finds warrant for his teachings. Of this inquiry I fear you may perhaps become impatient; it may seem to you collateral, but in truth we shall find it very pertinent and vital.

As lawyers, tradesmen, bankers, railroad managers, and men of manual labor, all of you have, I know full well, little time for metaphysics and philosophy. Therefore, I do not propose to undertake at this time a philosophical inquiry into the existence of

God. I shall not inquire into the truth of the Bible as a whole. I shall not reason in theological formulæ about the character of Jesus Christ. I bring you no system of theology. To different hands from mine must those inquiries be assigned, and from another standpoint than mine must those inquiries, for the graver purposes of life, be approached. Bear in mind then, if you please, that I do not propose to myself the lofty task of furnishing argument which shall solve the mighty questions suggested by the words God and Christ. Nevertheless, I conceive it to be impossible to rationally discuss the bearings of Ingersoll's teachings upon our secular interests without first inquiring into Ingersoll's doctrines concerning :

- I. God.
- II. Christ.
- III. The Bible.

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That inquiry I propose to prosecute only so far as shall enable me to assert, that as between the solutions offered by Ingersoll and his followers upon the one hand, and the Church upon the other, men of affairs and men who love their homes and their country cannot hesitate.

The opening sentence of Ingersoll's lecture on "The Gods"—a lecture containing every semblance of argument that he has ever urged against religion—contains the pregnant sophism of all his reasoning. He begins with the abrupt and startling statement, "Each nation has created a God." If that be true, then indeed has this gentleman found ground for sweeping arguments and fierce philippic. If history shows that human nature sets up for itself its own peculiar God, according to time and circumstance, why, then the frightful thought comes unbidden to the brain that we

may have done the same! That thought Ingersoll seizes upon and makes the central thought of his every endeavor. In every conceivable way; by hint and by jest; by innuendo and by positive allegation; by direction and indirection; everywhere and at all times does he seek to plant the belief that God is a creation of the imagination.

- And let me tell you, this one thought has unsettled more of you than the census-taker will ever discover. The pulpit is preaching against what it calls Modern Infidelity; but I say—and many of you will not believe me until you reflect upon it—I say that the need of the day is the destruction of Ancient Atheism. Countless are the reasons why men will not avow the full measure of their doubts concerning the existence of an omnipotent and personal God; nevertheless, those doubts exist, and are greater foes to the

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progress of religion than any of the causes more frequently assailed by the pulpit. I would not presume to tell clergymen their duty; yet mingling more than they with men of the world, I bring to them, from workshop and from farm, from the bar, and from the public places of every Venice where merchants most do congregate, the message that what most we need is the conviction that there is a personal God. Strive to supply that conviction, and seek to hedge it about with unanswerable argument, and the Church wins an invincible lodgment in the hearts of all sincere men. Upon this point, where too much is assumed every day by the pulpit as granted, has Ingersoll, with consummate ingenuity, struck, and said, "Each nation has created a God."

Let us look at that statement as we would at a proposition in law, politics, or trade.

Let us understand the words we use; for, as thought expresses itself in words, a right word is always as necessary as a right thought. We know from the tricks of trade, of legislation, and of politicians, that words may be mountains or pitfalls.

"What do you read, my lord?"  
inquired Polonius; and believe me, Hamlet was more a profound philosopher than simulated fool when he answered,

"Words, words, words."

Let us go to an arbiter accepted in all our courts. We ask of Webster the meaning of this wonderful word "God," and he tells us that the word stands first for an object of worship. This, however, he follows by defining the word to mean "the Supreme Being, the eternal and infinite Spirit, the Creator and Sovereign of the universe." Now turn to the word "Idol," and we find the primary

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meaning of that word to be "an image or representation of anything," and this he follows by further defining the word to mean "an image of a divinity." Now, with these definitions in mind, let us look again at the bold statement, "Each nation has created a God," and the argument must run thus: Each nation has created an object of worship. That we admit. What follows? That each nation has created an Eternal and Infinite Spirit, a Creator and Sovereign of the universe? Substitute the word "idol" or "images representing a god," and the argument is historically true. Substitute the words "Eternal and Infinite Spirit," and the argument is historically false. The fallacy lies—the very simple fallacy, when once it is exposed—in confounding the idea of worshipping an Eternal and Infinite Spirit *of which no graven image can be made*, with

the idea of worshipping imaginary or created beings capable of being symbolized by images. It is the fallacy of confounding idolatry or image-worship with the worship of the Eternal and Infinite Spirit. English-speaking peoples have named the Eternal and Infinite Spirit—GOD. But the poverty of our language has compelled us to call the objects of heathen worship—gods. It is remarkable—it is anomalous—but it is true, that the word when used in the singular has a meaning entirely dissociated from the meaning which attaches to the plural. Our conception of God, as defined by Webster, excludes the conception of gods, and Ingersoll, in speaking of gods, attempts to confound the two conceptions, and therein lies his fallacy. Substitute, I repeat, the word idols, or images representing a god, and his argument is historically true; substitute the

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words Eternal and Infinite Spirit, and his argument is historically false. Many nations have created gods, and each nation different gods; but among all nations may be found traces of the idea of the supreme God.

I affirm—and in making this affirmation I am not unmindful of the apparent exception noted by Sir John Lubbock—I affirm that among every people, in every quarter of the habitable globe, there exists this day, and has existed from the furthest reach of history, the idea of one eternal and all-powerful God. Among the Greeks the idea was embodied in their Zeus, and in the remotest period of Greek antiquity there lingered a faith in one supreme God. Confucius, five hundred years before the Christian era, addressed prayers to the mysterious and unknown power, and the oldest of Chinese books teach that there is one supreme

God. The Rig-Veda of ancient India speaks of One who is God above gods. The Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster, written, as all antiquaries agree, not less than one thousand years before the new era, recognizes one Original and Infinite Being. The mythology of ancient Egypt, with all its worship of animals and idols, has for its central fact that Osiris was the supreme God. In the religion of the Teutonic and Scandinavian races may be found their Odin, described in their Eddas and Sagas as the very God of gods. In the Pentateuch we learn that many centuries before the new era, the Jews believed in and worshipped Jehovah as the one ever-living and all-powerful God. The North American Indian has his one Great Spirit. Go where you will, to Europe, Asia, America, Africa, and to the islands of the sea, and all through the ages there runs the idea of one eternal

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and all-powerful God. While each and all of these nations have had many idols, many images of worship, many of Ingersoll's gods, yet among them all, and over and above them all, may be found traces of the idea of a supreme God. This fact, this very important historical fact, with which we necessarily begin our discussion, cannot be doubted—cannot be denied. It is as true as history itself, and it is as prominent as any other one fact in history.

Quitting the domain of history, Ingersoll goes to metaphysics, and asserts that man has no ideas, and can have none, except those suggested by his surroundings. He tells us that man cannot conceive of anything utterly unlike what he has seen or felt. In a word, he tells us that ideas and conceptions are the reflections of things.

I shall not suggest here any of the difficul-

ties which the intuitional school of metaphysicians oppose to the school that derive all ideas from sensation—the school from which Ingersoll takes his statement. On the contrary, I grant the statement to be true. But now, if the broad proposition be true that man has no ideas except those suggested by his surroundings, whence comes the idea, that has run like a golden gleam through the ages, of one Eternal and Omnipotent God?

Whence comes it?

By Ingersoll's own argument, by his own philosophy, by his own metaphysics, there must be such a God, else the idea would not exist!

And do you know that you cannot imagine a thing to be which does not exist? Make the experiment. Behold!—gorgons, naiads, and centaurs—angels of light and imps of darkness—Asmodeus with dyed garments—

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and Queen Mab—and the Culprit Fay—and Caliban—and the god Ahura Mazda, the Persian fount of primeval light—and fancies without number, as wild and spectral and grand as those of dreamland in a fevered sleep,—come and go and come again. But stop! You are simply imagining new combinations of old material! You have gone into that marvellous work-shop, your brain, and taken thence ideas which surroundings in the past have suggested, experience accumulated, and memory preserved, made novel combinations, and you, like Ingersoll, stand ready to proclaim yourself a Creator, when in fact you are only a carpenter and joiner! For, resolve now every one of your weirdest imaginings into its component parts, and Brahma the Golden and Vishnu the Sombre lie at your feet classified into legs and arms and heads and crescents, and necklaces of skulls.

Under this law every one of the high gods of heathendom is resolved into its constituent parts; the Devil of mediæval superstition falls back into his original elements of hoofs and horns, and his reputed home, the mediæval hell, fades away in vanishing clouds of sulphurous smoke, or disappears forever in the brilliant but evanescent and unreal flames of a poet's Inferno.

But the conception, the thought, the idea of one ever-living and all-powerful God, an eternal and infinite Spirit, is not touched by this law. That conception has no constituent elements. It is a single concept. It is absolute. It is a perfect type of unity. It stands alone. It lies beyond the line of imagination. It is of itself a revelation. Being an idea, then, which has existed from the beginning in the minds of men, it must, by Ingersoll's logic, be the reflection of a fact.

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Again, he tells us that a belief in God springs from fear and solicitude concerning future events and a desire to placate the Unknown. The stupendous error in this statement is the indisputable fact that man, civilized and uncivilized, learned and unlearned, vicious and innocent—yonder in the crowded streets of the city, and there in the solitude of the forest—now and in all past ages—turns in his darkest hours with trust and confidence to that God, and unconsciously, intuitively, instinctively acknowledges His goodness, by always, in the moment of calamity, invoking His aid. No! no! I tell you, in the name of every truthful line the muse of history has yet inspired, that Atheism is the primeval coward—your genuine coward—conceived in cowardice—brought forth in cowardice—reared in cowardice—and in the unclean garb of Nihilism, Socialism and Com-

munism, swaggers through Europe and America to-day, a cowardly braggart!

Atheism, vaporizing like Bessus, Pistol, or Bobadil, and as belligerent as Sir Lucius O'Trigger, grapples now and then, and overcomes, some sickly child begotten of an unhealthy orthodoxy, and forthwith proclaims itself a giant. At other times it falls, here and there, upon some discarded and defenceless tenet, left behind in the march of religious growth and progress, and around it dances the war-dance of a cowardly savage, and with an air of bravado proclaims itself the puissant and only foe of bigotry. Here, in the presence of scholars who have won distinction on a hundred intellectual battle-fields, I appeal to the history of intellectual development in every age and in every land, and make the explicit and direct charge that Atheism is the coward of the centuries, white-headed and

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craven-hearted, skulking through the by-ways of sophistry, and not daring to come into the presence of even a merciful God.

Again, Ingersoll tells us that ignorance of the causes of events and the phenomena of nature impelled man to assign supernatural causes. Hath not a little learning made Atheism mad?

Because an eclipse is now known to be no miracle; because the thunder is now known to be not God's voice, and the errant lightning not His thunderbolt; because the sun in truth does not rise, and the moon's phases are not the effects of an unknown power; because pestilence is the direful penalty of violating some law of nature and comes not as the blighting curse of some black angel sent to earth on a mission of woe; because in many instances science has explained phenomena which ignorance attributed to super-

natural causes, Atheism, forsooth, dispenses with God—waves aside the Almighty—bows out the Eternal One.

Come, then, and tell us the secret of the great law of gravitation; explain to us the beating of the heart; tell us what the principle of life is in animal or plant; explain the origin of protoplasm or monad; whom or what do those heavenly bodies obey which complete their orbits “only after the lapse of ages, and which reappear with unfailing precision at the point from which they started, as if to present themselves to Him who sent them on their way;” how comes it that races of men and animals are conserved by a due proportion of male and female births; whence comes and what is force, and what is thought, and what is love, and what is conscience, and where and what is the power that holds and guides throughout countless æons, sun, earth,

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and moon in their majestic courses ; and why is it that one drop of water is still as wonderful as all the seas, one leaf as all the forests, and one grain of sand as all the stars ?

Here, then, is the Atheistic dilemma. As knowledge increases, the vista of the unknown enlarges, and thereby the very cause assigned for an increase of scientific Atheism becomes a more potent reason for a belief in God.

But once again, he tells us that nature is too ill-contrived an affair at best, susceptible of too many improvements for it ever to have come from the omnipotent hand of an all-wise and all-merciful God. Our brilliant Atheist would have made the earth free from disease and pain — no sorrow, no suffering, no sickness, no enfeebled age, no storm, nor famine, nor pestilence, nor death. I ask the question here : — Has Atheism any

infallible scheme of its own whereby these evils, one or all, may be removed? And from the gloomy retreat of Fatalism there comes the sullen answer: Nay—we have none. I ask another question: With all the woe and suffering of earth, is there not more of happiness than sorrow? And again the reluctant answer comes: Crime and wretchedness dwell only here and there. Once more I ask: Is it not true that our blessings are in a measure conditioned by our evils—that without vice there could be no stern and durable virtue in morals, and without a conflict with nature none of our glorious progress in science? And even the philosophy of Atheism must answer: All this is true. Were it otherwise, nature itself would be

“ Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,  
Dead perfection, no more.”

The “moving why” of evil we may not solve, but its existence strengthens not one whit the arm of Atheism.

It may seem that cruelty goes unpunished, virtue unrewarded, and injured innocence unrequited ; but who can tell ?

What is the plan, of which we are parts, and what shall be its final outcome ? We know a little of this planet and of our times, and have books we call histories ; but what of the future and its reckoning ? And this world we call ours—it is but a star of minor magnitude in the great firmament of stars. Who, even the most casual and indifferent reader, thinking of that future, can look into yonder firmament and see the infinite hosts of worlds roll by, and not catch a glimpse of the deep, deep meaning in the words of that Wonderful One who claimed kinship with God, and said, at eventide, and

perhaps pointing to the stars:—"In my Father's house are many mansions"?

Enough now of these cavillings. Let us go on to matter of more moment to us all.

In dealing with Ingersoll's eloquent denials, with his brilliant banterings, with his coruscating captiousness, we cannot but feel that we are only skirting the borders of the matter in hand, that we are parties to a guerilla war on the frontier. Let us turn, therefore, and go further, not forgetting that we are now at length brought face to face with a subject of awful significance.

It matters very little to us as business men, I am sure, whether this or that creed, or this or that article of faith, has few or many doctrinal errors in it; but our social, our business, and our political life contain so many hidden springs of action resting upon the idea that there is one eternal and all-power-

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ful God, that we would not—ought not—can not—do not—rest until we feel that our feet are upon a rock. It is not enough, then, that we answer the cavils and sneers of Atheism. Let us move, therefore, into a position where we may invite attack—a position which no form of infidelity has ever yet successfully assailed.

Two hundred years ago, Ralph Cudworth, in his grand work—"The True Intellectual System of the Universe"—revived the ancient query: Were eyes made for the sake of seeing, and were ears made for the sake of hearing? But a day or two ago, as it were, Joseph Cook, with all the power of a master mind and tongue, brought scientific Atheism face to face with that same question, and defied a denial of its proof of God. Let me convey to you, for purposes of my own, this argument of Cudworth's and Cook's, divested

of its metaphysical and technical terms ; and here let me ask for a single moment only your close attention.

The idea or thought of sight preceded the making of an eye. The idea or thought of hearing preceded the making of an ear.

“ How do you know that ? ” asks an auditor. In the same way that I know that question existed in your mind before you gave it language. Your language is but the outer coating of your doubt. The doubt rested in your mind until your language came as a vehicle to carry the doubt to me. So the eye and the ear are but articulate expressions of the two thoughts, sight and hearing.

Now Paley came, many years ago, and said, as you have all often heard, “ There can be no design without a designer.” And Socrates said it, and Plato said it, two thousand three hundred years ago, and the best intel-

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lects of the human race have said it in every age. And it is true, true enough; but I am not taking your time with a needless repetition of the celebrated "design argument." There is something more than mere design in eye and ear, in sight and hearing—much more. Sight and hearing are in and of themselves thoughts ; thoughts which had an existence in the mind of something or some one before ever ear and eye were made: Not only can there be no design without a designer, but there can be no thought without a thinker.

There is design in the eye, it is true, but there is thought in sight. There is design in the ear, it is true, but there is thought in hearing. There is thought in nature ; there is thought in this boundless universe of ours ; there is thought in history, as epoch slowly succeeds epoch ; and all that thought is other

than our thought ; and thought other than our own simply means a thinker other than ourselves, for there can be no thought without a thinker.

There is the logic of old, breaking anew like a sun-burst upon this age of facts ! It is invincible. Its very simplicity makes it incomparably grand. Before it, the laws of evolution and development, of conservation and correlation of forces, must take their places as secondary causes. Let the human eye be the consummation of countless ages of growth and development, if you will ; yet above that growth and development must have stood a Thinker with the preconceived idea or thought of sight. There is the logic of the psalmist, the philosopher of old, and the devout scientist of to-day. History and reason must bow before it. I repeat, it is invincible. Pleasurable as the task would be,

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I need not dwell upon it. Elaboration cannot strengthen it. It is but one of a million of illustrations. Its full force will come upon you in countless ways. Fix in your minds and hold firmly, now and hereafter, the undeniable proposition that there can be no thought other than our own unless there be somewhere in the universe a thinker other than ourselves, and surely and steadily you move by the light of reason into the sublime presence of the great Thinker of the universe — the wonderful, the omnipotent, the ineffable One whom the Christian world calls God.

As rational men, we will go now out into the world, each man to his own particular station, carrying with him the consciousness of one Eternal and Infinite Being.

Now, what are the moral attributes of that

Being? We cannot pass from this branch of our discussion just yet, for this question demands an answer here, because man has a moral nature; because there is something in every man which says: "I ought," and "I ought not." Weave around this fact all the casuistry you will, and tell me, if you choose, with Hume, and Volney, and Voltaire, that "I ought" in Constantinople simply means "I ought not" in London; still the fact remains that God made man with this omnipresent "I ought" implanted in his nature.

And this moral, like the intellectual part of man, must have a teacher. Man must have an ideal. That moral ideal will be found when he finds the attributes of his God and learns how he may grow toward them.

I am preaching no abstruse philosophy. I simply proclaim human nature as God made it. In art, in literature, in religion, in poli-

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tics, in business and in every-day life, men grow toward their ideals. Every man, young or old, has, consciously or unconsciously, his ideal. A thousand things betoken it in childhood. Study your little ones for a passing hour as they play about your hearth-stone, and you will see that a thousand things betoken, in children even, their ideals of manhood and womanhood. The school-room, then, of the mental man, must have, somewhere and somehow, in society, a counterpart for the moral man. A teacher, I say, and an ideal, all must have. Why, eighteen hundred years ago, Plutarch said that whenever we begin an enterprise, or take possession of a charge, or experience a calamity, we place before our eyes the greatest men of our own or of by-gone ages, and ask ourselves how Plato, Epaminondas, or Lycurgus, would have acted. And he adds that, looking into these



personages as into a faithful mirror, we may remedy our defects in word or deed; and whenever any perplexity arises or any passion disturbs the mind, the student of philosophy pictures to himself some of those who have been justly celebrated for their virtues, and the recollection sustains his tottering steps and prevents his fall.

Another thought just here: Lecky, in his "History of Morals," regards it, and justly, I think, as an axiomatic fact, that any moral system for the government of society must be capable of influencing natures which can never rise to a heroic level. So it comes that if Plutarch's philosopher needs an ideal, much more must we, as plain men of business, as men of every-day life, possess an ideal too. Who, then, shall be our moral ideal, and where shall we find our moral teacher? A plain practical question that I put to you in

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the interests of your homes and your children, in the interest of society, in the interest of our country, and not in the interest of any sect under the broad dome of heaven ; and I answer that question by saying that The Book, and The Book alone, can furnish that teacher, and The Book alone can supply that ideal ; and by The Book I mean the aggregate of religious teachings and influences embodied in and derived from the Bible.

The one unifying element which permeates all Christian sects and denominations is a common faith in the moral and religious sufficiency of the Bible ; and again do I say that the Bible furnishes, and it alone, the Teacher and the Ideal we seek.

Ingersoll and his followers say, “ No ! ” Modern infidelity steps to the front, in this the evening of the nineteenth century, and

cries, "No!—go to the Trinity of Reason, Observation, and Experience."

Let us try this issue in Ingersoll's own chosen forum—the court of Experience. The mighty question which greets us at the very threshold, as plain practical men—for we of this Western world are plain practical men—the question, I say, which greets us at the very threshold is: *Whose* experience, observation and reason shall guide us, who stand in need of a teacher? Plato's, the very king of philosophers? Why, he taught that wives should be held in common, in order that their children might be the more exclusively attached to their country. He advocated suicide in the presence of poverty or other great calamity; and in this, Seneca, Pliny, and other schools of philosophy, agree. Take the ancient teachers, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and all—than whom, I take it, not even Robert

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Ingersoll himself, nor any of his disciples, is a greater philosopher—and concede all that may be claimed for their philosophy and learning, and grant that in the five hundred years prior to the advent of the new era, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, mechanics, and other sciences, achieved grand distinction, yet the indisputable fact remains that in point of public and private morals their times were as dark as the darkest of all the ages. It is historically true, and every classical scholar knows that even their goddesses were odiously impure, and that the most debasing of idolatrous rites and ceremonies prevailed.

I am speaking history now. Look to every point of the compass during the five hundred years prior to the advent of the New Era, among nations barbarous or polished, and a black impenetrable mass of moral disorder

and ruin rises before our eyes. I repeat, I am speaking history. Under the guidance of philosophy, led by reason, observation, and experience, revenge and rapine, fraud, theft, suicide and cruelty, were patronized and countenanced by the masses, taught by philosophers, and reprobated by none. Short-lived epochs free from those vices may be found, but they stand as prominent exceptions to an almost universal rule. Moral misery, like a black portentous cloud, overshadowed the world with gloom. Why? In the presence of all this learning and philosophy, why this condition of public morals?

These five hundred years are the golden age, it seems to me, of the human mind, in purely intellectual achievements. Our century, it is true, outstrips all the centuries in displays of inventive genius, in feats of utility. But ours is a mechanical age; that, an

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age of lofty speculation, of intellect in its higher walks, of philosophy, art, and poetry. That was the age that saw Socrates in the streets of Athens, heard Plato in his garden near the Academy, and beheld in the Acropolis the Olympian Jupiter fresh from the immortal chisel of the master Phidias. It was the age that gave us Euclid and his pupil Archimedes—that gave us Aristotle—that gave us Demosthenes. It was the age that read history fresh from the unrivalled pen of Thucydides, and applauded the wonderful dramas of Æschylus. It was an age, indeed, that saw in sculptured marble rarer forms of grace and beauty and majestic power than the world ever saw before or since; that heard strains of eloquence and poetry as thrilling as ever fell on mortal ear; that pondered the grave problems of life with as profound insight as unaided intellect has ever

shown; and in every department of speculative philosophy reached the very mountain heights of human endeavor.

Again do I ask, why, in such an age as that, do we find such a condition of public morals?

The answer is simple, direct, and unmistakably true:— Because there was no universally recognized standard of moral truth; because there was no generally accepted code of right; and because there was no order of men to instruct the masses in morals. Ancient Ingersollism held undisputed sway, and universal night brooded over land and sea.

Slowly, beautifully, like the coming of the dawn, like the soft approach of the sunrise, comes from Judea a new philosophy. Here let us pause a moment.

We have gone out into our business world—gone with man to his counting-room,

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and workshop, and farm—left him to his struggle with life and nature, conscious only of God, and looking around and above for an ideal, and troubled by the perplexing altercations of the omnipresent “I ought” and “I ought not.” Let us still leave him there, and go back through the ages, and, retracing our steps, discover if we can the secret of our modern civilization, and learn if we may where man shall find the Ideal One.

There is a book in two volumes called the Bible. It claims to be authentic. Admit that claim for the present—for a few moments only. The older volume closes with a prophecy; the new opens with a fulfilment and culminates with a revelation. The older volume fills one with the feeling that a marvellous but undisclosed element underlies the movement of the book. Generations come

and go, but seem to tend in one direction. There seems to be a life below the surface, and in the words of an unknown writer: "Through the prophetic veil there glows the image of a man, stranger to every one, yet friendly to all." And a marvellous image it is!—so indistinct, and yet so positive; gentle, yet carrying awful power; very near, yet distant as the unseen God; and a strange spell binds the reader, until, having closed the prophecies, he opens the next volume, and in the opening chapter finds the Past assembled—forty-two generations, convened as witnesses to attest a birth—and comes to the Star, the Virgin, and the Child!

Shall we stop now to question the incomprehensible? Remember, we are moving in the presence of the Infinite, and to deny the possibility of an Incarnation is to deny the omnipotence of the Omnipotent!

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The story moves rapidly on. The angelic Annunciation, the Manger, the homage of the Wise Men—all pass before us like a panorama. Then come the sword of Herod, the flight, the retirement for thirty years, interrupted only by a re-appearance at the age of twelve; then come the Baptism, the Temptation, the Sermon on the Mount; then come miracles and parables and sayings—a new philosophy—the calling of followers—a tumult among people and rulers—the betrayal—the trial—the crucifixion—the resurrection—the ascension. Three years more have passed; the Pentecost and the Church soon follow, and—be that story true or false—the mightiest revolution known among men is begun, for the Being whose strange career we have gazed upon shall become the Christ of civilized humanity!

Now, what has this singular narration to

do with you and your interests as business men? Let us pursue our argument yet a while, and we shall see.

I do not stop now to argue that the principal of these events as historical realities actually occurred. The German and the French rationalistic schools of infidelity made all-important concessions here fifteen years ago, and an intelligent minister or priest shall convince you of it in a single sermon. I do not claim that any one or more of these events sustain any doctrine peculiar to some Christian sect. Enough and more than enough of such discourses are always at your hands. I shall not enter upon an argument to prove that these events fulfil a prophecy. Every Bible student is armed here from top to toe, and every congregation can set forward scores of such who shall give you in an hour overwhelming proofs.

All this, however, is aside from, or at best incidental to, my purpose. But one fact we cannot overlook—a tremendous fact: this Christ—no matter now what He may be, no matter now who He may be, no matter now whether this book we have found be inspired or uninspired—*this Christ holds up His life as the Model Life.* He claims to be the Ideal Man. His unparalleled audacity—if I may use the expression—is such that he actually stands up before the entire world and challenges criticism.

His two fundamental laws arrest and command our attention:—

No man can escape his own record.

Every man must face some kind of a judgment.

Laws irrevocable, and absolutely true in business, politics, morals, and every-day life.

With such a life, then, for an example, and



with such laws for a foundation, the Church passes into the arena of history, offers Christ's life as an ideal for all humanity, and Christ's teachings as a universal code of morals. Now comes the test, the infallible test of time—time, into whose crucible all impostures must go, and out of which none have ever yet come unharmed.

Mark the procession of the centuries ! Nero is Emperor of Rome now, and the century closes with Trajan wearing the imperial crown. The next century finds Marcus Aurelius on the banks of the Danube ; the next, and Diocletian is Emperor ; and the next is ushered in by Constantine the Great, and closing sees the Empire divided. Another century, and Attila invades Italy, and Rome is plundered by the Vandals and is recaptured by Belisarius in the next. Then comes the century that sees Mohammed's

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glory, flight, and death, and another that closes with Charlemagne preparing for his coronation as Emperor of the West. The next century brings to Alfred the Great the imperial robes of Britain, and the next finds the house of Capet on the throne of France. A thousand years have passed! Harold is King of England now, the battle of Hastings is fought, and William the Conqueror has come. Another century, and Ireland is subdued, and King John and his barons rule England. Another passes, and the Ottoman Empire appears. Another opens with Bruce crowned King of Scotland; Bannockburn is fought, and Bruce has died. The next century sees Henry the Fourth King of England, and in the next the battle of Agincourt is fought; Joan of Arc dies at the stake; Martin Luther is born; America is discovered; modern history is begun; the light of

universal intelligence is breaking; the centuries lose their distinctness, and we begin to measure time by eras of progress and epochs of thought, until at last there pass before us the wonders of the nineteenth century—and there, there in the very midst of its glory and culture, in the midst of its millions of purposes and plans, in the midst of its engines and telegraphs and systems and palaces and philosophies, we find there has come through all the blood and tears and tyrannies of centuries, “marching with slow and stately tread across the realms” and across the ages, the Man-God—the God-Man—the Christ of modern Christianity; and with a gentleness unutterable and a majesty unspeakable, is winning the heart and moulding the character of the man whom we left with naught for a guide but the consciousness of one Eternal and Infinite

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Being—yea, winning his heart and moulding his character here in this Western world of ours, *by teaching him the two simple lessons of the Fatherhood of God and the Universal Brotherhood of Man.*

Think of it!—Eighteen hundred years of relentless criticism, and there lives not this day upon the face of the globe an honest and intelligent sceptic who dare lay his finger upon a single point in the character of the Ideal Man and deny that it is absolute moral perfection.

A question now—and then we pass to another branch of our discussion. Is this a mere man—this Ideal One—and what is there in His religion and His alone that adapts itself to men of all nations, despite the laws of climate and of race? Climatic influences, customs and circumstances, it is said, shape religions and beliefs—and this

broad generalization of modern philosophy has shaken the faith of many an inquiring mind, as I frankly confess to you it for years shook mine. A man is a Mohammedan, we are told, simply because he is born in Turkey; he is a worshipper of Buddha, or a follower of Confucius, because he is born in India, China or Japan ; and he is a Christian, simply and only because he is born in England or North America. This broad generalization of modern philosophy to-day shakes the faith of many candid and inquiring men. Now concede to this law all that Buckle and Draper have claimed for it—for it is from Buckle and Draper that modern infidelity has derived its arguments upon this point—concede to it all these authors have claimed for it, and by it you may perhaps be able to explain why the south of Europe should be Roman Catholic, while the north became

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Protestant, and of that which became Protestant, Switzerland and the west of Europe became Calvinistic, while most of Germany, Sweden, Denmark and Norway became Lutheran. By some such natural law, it may perhaps not be difficult to tell why the Geneva school of Calvinism became the model for France, Holland, Scotland, part of England, and consequently for North America. By an exposition of the laws which make the temperament a guide to the mental characteristics, you may perhaps be able to explain why men of sanguine temperament may be Methodists, or severe and thoughtful men be Presbyterians; those of an analytic turn of mind go to the Baptist theology; the synthetic to the Episcopalian; and thus go on and point out the mental or other peculiarities of each great denomination. But tell me, I beg, by what natural law do you explain it;

tell me why it is that all the creeds of Christendom, and all the civilized nations of the earth, unite in accepting the Ideal Man of Christianity, despite the laws of climate and of race? I will attempt to answer the question from the standpoint of a man of the world.

When we ask why His can be the only universal religion, I look to all other religions and I see written in each, one word that reveals the cause. It is a word more hateful than that word superstition, on which modern infidels concentrate their wrath—more hateful than the word bigotry—more hateful than the word cruelty—more hateful than the word oppression—for it is the word that sums them all, superstition, bigotry, cruelty, and oppression, and that word is CASTE.

Go to China, to India, to Turkey, or to Persia, and in each nation religion becomes the

synonym of Caste. There, man is taught that there is much in God for the worshipper to adore ; here, the worshipper is taught that there is something in man, in every man, *worthy the attention of God himself.* There, man is taught that there are inequalities among men ; here, men are taught that all are equal before the Infinite.

In my judgment as a politician, looking at the matter purely from the standpoint of political philosophy, the commanding feature of Christ's philosophy is that no man, however rich or however poor, however wise or however ignorant, is to be despised ; and if the wise and the rich hate the ignorant and the poor, or the ignorant and the poor hate the wise and the rich, the hater stands condemned.

To my mind, the grand central thought of Christianity is that every living soul of every race, of every clime, of every creed, of every

condition, of every color — every living soul — is worth a kingdom !

I can read between the lines on every page of the four biographies of the Nazarene, that the great heart of the Infinite would willingly suffer an age of agony for the sake of the humblest man or woman in all the world.

Who can measure the effect upon society of this doctrine ? Who can estimate its power for good ? Why, more of charity and benevolence, and more of social and intellectual progress, may be found in that one peculiar feature of Christianity than in all other systems and philosophies combined. And here I challenge Infidelity to name an era or a school in which this doctrine was taught as a duty prior to the advent of the Ideal Man. I grant you that the very poor, in different ages prior to the new era, had their physical necessities cared for ; but no system ever be-

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fore ran the whole gamut of social gradation, from the highest note down to the lowest, and pronounced them all divine. I say *all*; for midway between poverty and wealth surges the great ocean of humanity, over whose troubled waters still walks the Ideal Man, and as of old says, "Peace, be still."

Now take the fact that the Author of Christianity put this unparalleled estimate upon human nature, and put it, too, upon a human nature capable of fastening his body like a malefactor's to a wooden cross, and you have the peculiar thought in the Christian system which gives it a distinctive and universal genius.

Now to our other question—Is the Author and Exponent of this wonderful system merely a man? I need not tell you that such a question—a question that has filled whole libraries and engaged the life-long labors of

thousands of earth's greatest scholars—cannot be answered, and the answer placed beyond cavil, in a single lecture nor in a single volume. Go, therefore, in this passing hour and avail yourself of the conclusions of another, but nevertheless conclusions which your judgment shall respect when to-morrow you bring them to the test of reason and reflection. As the lawyers say, let us submit the question to an expert. And why not? Property and life itself hang every day in our courts upon such testimony. But where shall we find one so competent and yet so disinterested that the highest intellects in the infidel world will admit him to the witness-stand?—where one who has gone into many countries, read with care the histories of all nations, investigated all religions, and studied and understood, as no other man, the secret springs of human action?—where one who brought

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to the investigation of social laws and customs a genius which the whole world shall recognize, a genius free from bias in favor of any creed or sect, and who shall testify with a spirit absolutely disinterested? Such a one we have, and he bears the greatest of all names in modern history: the name of Napoleon! Let me remind you now that in Napoleon's lifetime Volney had lived, Hume had lived, Holbach and Rousseau had lived, Voltaire had lived, and Paine wrote his "Age of Reason" and had lived in Paris ten years before Napoleon became Emperor of the French. The philosophies of all these men passed before him in review. In brief, let me remind you that Napoleon lived in an infidel age, when literature breathed the spirit of infidelity, and when legislation, art, and customs, all bore the impress of the master minds of infidelity.

His wonderful career had closed, and at St. Helena no cause for dissimulation remained. An ambitious, cruel, heartless, wicked man, this Napoleon had been; a tyrant, a despot, a scourge, the enemy of his race, if you will; but with it all, he possessed an intellect as penetrating and profound as ever human being was gifted with. Conclusions stamped with the approval of his great mind are themselves arguments. But listen to the testimony, and hear not only the conclusions but the arguments of that mind. Indulge me, then, for a single moment, while I merely repeat the words that fell from him. { Turning from a reverie, he said to his favorite general and companion :

“I know men, Bertrand, and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the gods of other religions. That resemblance

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does not exist. \* \* \* Paganism was never accepted as truth by the wise men of Greece, by Socrates, Pythagoras, Plato, Anaxagoras, nor Pericles; but upon the other side, the loftiest intellects have had a living faith in the doctrines of the Gospel,—not only Bossuet and Fenelon, who were preachers, but Descartes and Newton, Leibnitz and Pascal, Corneille and Racine, Charlemagne and Louis XIV. Paganism is the work of man. What do their gods know more than other mortals—these priests of India or of Memphis—this Confucius, this Mohammed? Absolutely nothing. \* \* \* Are these gods and these religions to be compared with Christianity? As for me, I say—No! I summon the entire Olympus of the gods to my tribunal. I—Napoleon—judge the gods. The gods of China and of India, of Athens and of Rome, have nothing which can over-

awe me. \* \* \* I see in Lycurgus, Numa, and Mohammed, only legislators who sought the best solution of the social problem. I see nothing which reveals divinity. I recognize the gods and these great men as beings like myself. They performed a lofty part in their times, as I have done. There are many resemblances between them and myself, foibles and errors, allying them to me and to humanity. It is not so with Christ. Everything in Him astonishes me. His spirit overawes me and His will confounds me. He is a being by himself. His birth and the history of His life, the profundity of His doctrine, which grapples with the mightiest difficulties, and is of those difficulties the most admirable solution, His Gospel, His apparition, His empire, everything is to me a prodigy, an insoluble mystery, a mystery which is there before my eyes, a mystery which I neither

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can deny nor explain. \* \* \* One can absolutely find nowhere but in Him alone the imitation or the example of His life. The nearer I approach, the more carefully I examine, everything is above me, everything remains grand, of a grandeur which overpowers. \* \* \* I search in vain in history to find a parallel to Jesus Christ, or anything which can approach the Gospel. Neither history nor humanity nor the ages can offer me anything with which I am able to compare it or explain it. The more I consider that Gospel the more I am assured that there is nothing there which is not beyond the march of events and above the human mind. Who but God could produce that style of perfection, equally exclusive and original? \* \* \*

In every other existence but that of Christ, how many imperfections! Where is the character which has not yielded, vanquished

by obstacles? Where is the individual who has never been governed by circumstances or places, who has never succumbed to the influence of the times, who has never compounded with any customs or passions? From the first day to the last, He is the same, always the same, majestic and simple, infinitely firm and infinitely gentle. \* \* \* Christ speaks, and at once generations become His by stricter, closer ties than those of blood. I have so inspired multitudes that they would die for me. But after all, my presence was necessary. \* \* \* Such is Christianity, the only religion which destroys sectional prejudice, the only one which is purely spiritual, in fine the only one which assigns to all, without distinction, for a true country, the bosom of the Creator, God. Christ proved that He was the Son of the Eternal by His disregard of *Time*. All His

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doctrines signify one and the same thing, ETERNITY. \* \* \* Behold the destiny near at hand of him who has been called the great Napoleon! What an abyss between my misery and the eternal reign of Christ, which is proclaimed, loved, adored, and which is extending over all the earth! Is this to die? Is it not rather to live? The death of Christ! It is the death of a God. \* \* \* Bertrand, if you do not perceive that Jesus Christ is God, very well—then I did wrong to make you a general."

Scoffer and sceptic may rise now and denounce the ambition and countless crimes of this witness. But his discernment, his penetration, his judgment, his knowledge of men and motives, his genius, they dare not deny. There, then, upon that platform and upon that, a short time ago in Washington City, still later in Chicago, and to-morrow else-

where, is Ingersoll sneering at the religion of Christ. Yonder at St. Helena, solemnly confessing Christ to be above humanity, calmly sits the prodigy of earth, autocrat of autocrats, genius incarnate, the intellectual wonder of the world; and let Ingersoll and his followers profit by the comparison.

Permit me here a brief digression. Many of you are familiar with the arguments of Strauss and Renan and others of the school those writers represent. Admitting that Jesus Christ existed, they allege, however, that there is so much of myth and legend and tradition surrounding His life and intermingled with His teachings, that Christianity is at best a mythical, legendary, and traditional affair. Admitting further that Christ was a good man, yet they tell us He was invested by His enthusiastic followers with attributes He did not possess. We are fur-

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ther told that there is much in Christianity that is not new; that the Immaculate Conception is an idea hundreds of years older than the Christian religion; that Krishna, several centuries before Christ, was born of a virgin; that the doctrine of the Trinity is older than Christianity; and that scattered here and there through the older religions of the world are other fragments of Christian doctrines and beliefs. Much of all this is true, and upon these truths Rationalism rears an argument to the effect that Christianity is simply an aggregation—a crystallization around Christ—of the fragments scattered through older religions; that it is largely mythical and legendary in its origin, and will not bear the analysis of advanced and critical scholarship.

At one time this reasoning set me adrift for awhile, and profounder men than I have

had the same experience. I allude to this phase of infidelity, not to enter upon a refutation of it, but to give you an example of the logic it employs, and by that example to illustrate the value of such reasoning.

If there be any truth in the old Pythagorean doctrine of the transmigration of souls, let us imagine that the spirit of Ernst Renan shall pass into some historian who three or five hundred years hence will sit down to write the history of our country and especially of these later times. He begins by saying we are now a nation of two hundred millions of people; about the middle of the nineteenth century we were only forty millions; now we have a grand federation of one hundred states, then we had only thirty-eight; then the republic was just emerging from its infancy, now it surpasses in grandeur the fondest dreams of its earlier statesmen. What caused

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this wondrous growth, this marvellous development? Some of our people once believed—and, indeed, the story is current still—that in those days an institution known as human slavery existed in America, an institution under which human beings were owned and bartered as cattle, and that under its blighting influences the growth of our nation was retarded and social progress held in check. Further the story runs, that between the years 1860 and 1870 a man named Abraham Lincoln was raised up by the people of the North and made their leader; that by his side, as aid and counsellor, was a man named Hannibal Hamlin; that these men called around them the people of twenty-eight states, and went forth and made war upon the people of the other states, won great victories, and wiped from the face of the land the stain of slavery. Thereupon the upward and onward

progress of our nation immediately became wonderful in rapidity, until at last we have grown beyond all that ever patriot hoped for.

This is the story ; but we are not satisfied with it. It will not bear analysis. Later investigation convinces us that it is simply an aggregation of fragmentary truths scattered through history. That such a person as Lincoln existed may be true, but we feel warranted in saying that his enthusiastic admirers have invested him with qualities he did not possess. Let us look at this tradition in the light of critical scholarship. Abraham Lincoln! Why, the very first syllables of his name — *Abra* — furnish a clue to the mythical or legendary character of the whole story. The word *Abram* in the original means *mighty father*, but was frequently used to signify *benefactor*. A ray of light falls on the legendary nature of the story ; *Abram*—*benefactor*.

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Let us go a step further. We have recently discovered that in those times, among all English-speaking people, the word *Ham* stood synonymous with the word *slave*, and that slaves were frequently called the sons of Ham. We at once perceive that the mythical or symbolic significance of the name Abraham is greatly enhanced by the remarkable discovery that Abraham means *Abra*, benefactor; *Ham*—slave: benefactor of the slave. Now this significant fact must cast a doubt upon the story in the mind of every critical scholar. But still further. Hannibal Hamlin! We positively deny the existence of any such person. We find no authentic trace of him before that war, and his career ended when that war closed. He drops out of the story as suddenly as he enters it. A moment's analysis will convince the most sceptical. His name furnishes conclusive proof. The first

syllable of his name, *Ham*, is the last syllable of *Abraham*, and the second syllable of his name, *lin*, is the first syllable of Lincoln ; so we discover that the name Hamlin is taken bodily out of the middle of the name Abraham Lincoln, and the people believe his given name was Hannibal because those times were war times, and the story is a war legend, and Hannibal had been known for many centuries as a great warrior ! Can any critical scholar now doubt the mythical origin of the story ? But still further : It is said that those two men led the people of twenty-eight states. Count the letters in the name, Abraham Lincoln ; there are fourteen. Count the letters in the name, Hannibal Hamlin ; there are fourteen. Combine the two and there are twenty-eight ! Who believes that this is mere accident, and that the twenty-eight letters are not designed to stand for the

twenty-eight states that waged the war, and who can fail to see in this, traces of that ancient superstition which attributed magical power to the relation which numbers bore to names and events?

Thus dissecting this story, we find it doubtful, mythical, traditional, legendary, and, as free-thinkers, as rational independent investigators, we reject it, doubt if slavery ever existed, believe the war a myth, and deny that Lincoln and Hamlin ever lived!

This ludicrous analysis is, I submit, as good an argument as Renan's against Christianity; and our remote descendants shall, if they be bold free-thinkers, capable of independent thought, and brave enough to spurn the teachings of priest and preacher, consign to the limbo of exploded superstitions the story of the war for freedom; and one of the grand names of the age—the name of

Lincoln, a name we had believed immortal — shall be quietly dismissed with a scholarly and intellectual sneer.

I now assert that we have found enough of argument to justify us in holding true two fundamental beliefs :

First — God exists.

- Second — Christ is a God-given ideal.

From these two facts, a third must logically issue. If Christ be God-given, so much of that book we found and called the Bible as faithfully records his works and truthfully reports his sayings must be true. There can be no escape from this conclusion. I reverse the ordinary process of reasoning, and sum the argument up in what to my mind is now an unanswerable sentence, and say — whatever is true of a God-given Christ must be God-given truth. That much of the Bible is

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enough. Now let theologians say how much that excludes, or let them say that it includes it all—it matters not to me; I say that so much of that book as bears upon the Ideal Man, and so much of that book as the Ideal Man has set the seal of his approval on, we may safely accept as a moral teacher.

The great want in the heart and brain of many thinking men, when they come to the Bible, is antecedent ground for belief in its truthfulness. I argue, therefore, not from the Bible to Christ, but from Christ to the Bible. I do not believe in Christ because of the Bible, but I believe in the Bible because of Christ.

Remembering that his maxims and teachings, when faithfully applied, invariably solve every moral problem of life, and contemplating the acknowledged fact that those same teachings, when viewed simply as an

ethical and philosophical system, exhibit wisdom far beyond any known among men, I am compelled to say, He indeed is the infallible Teacher.

The infallibility of Christ is a broader and stronger argument for the Book than all the theories of inspiration that men have yet devised. The seal of His approval is, even on rationalistic ground, a sufficient warrant for our acceptance of that Book. Such surpassing wisdom as His cannot be mistaken—such surpassing purity and love cannot deceive us. The impress of His royal signet has placed the writings of Moses and all the prophets where they cannot fall until He, the Christ, Himself has fallen.

So we come at last to God, Christ, and the Bible, and as rational men have reason for the faith that is in us.

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Now what interest have we who come from counting-room and store-room, from legislative halls and boards of trade, and from the various industrial walks of life, what interest have we in the aggregate of religious teachings and influences to which I have already referred as embodied in and derived from the Bible? I do not mean an interest so far as they bear upon what is called "Salvation," but I have come to the practical view, and I mean an interest so far as our *immediate* objects are concerned.

What are those objects? I think they may be comprehended in three things:

- I. As citizens, a stable and pure government.
- II. As business men, the acquisition of property.
- III. As social beings, happy homes.

We can best determine the bearing of the church upon these three great objects of life by considering the legitimate results of Ingersollism. Government, Property, and Home shall now constitute our trinity, the business man's trinity, neither element self-existent, all co-dependent; and when properly combined and each properly adjusted in all its relations to the other, we may call the result Civilization. In this trinity may be found all the elements of business, society, and politics.

Let us now take the Ingersoll creed, "Happiness in this life," for our creed too. Unquestionably the most happiness is derived from the highest civilization, and the highest civilization is obtained only when Government, Property, and Home are each and all conserved. In the name, then, of this trinity I have come to arraign and denounce Ingersoll's teachings as a crime against gov-

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ernment and law; as a crime against commerce and trade; as a crime against civilization; and, in one word, as a crime against humanity.

Now take human nature as it is—and in this way alone may we deal with social problems—take human nature as it is, and can you conceive of free government and civil law existing among, say fifty millions of people, who have none of the restraints of religious teaching and influence about them? Remember, it is not alone to compel your profound philosopher to be just, that civil government, and civil law with all its complex variations, are instituted. Socrates, Aristotle, and Solon may need neither civil government nor civil law; but the ever perplexing question which haunts your wise statesman and your honest politician is, What of the millions?

The scholar in his easy chair may speculate and reason away all religion, and yet go out into the world and perhaps for a time be an honest and just man. The intuitive decision of bright and thorough-edged intellect may part error from crime, and the silver flow of a subtle-paced counsel may make safe citizens of Plato, Voltaire, and Ingersoll. But what of the hewer of wood, whose life is a struggle for bread, raiment, and shelter, for himself, his wife, and his little ones? We often speak of the hewer of wood but when we think of him in relation to time and opportunity for acquiring any other than the simple creed of Bible-taught morality, how many of us become hewers of wood—mechanics, farmers, merchants, tradesmen, professional men, and all the toilers of the thousand other laborious callings known among men? What shall I say of the mill-

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ions — the people — that surging, boundless ocean of humanity we call the masses? Indeed, my sceptical friend, the impenetrable wall of an iron necessity shuts off from the millions much of the Infidel's creed — reason, observation, and experience. Ninety out of every hundred men, nay, more, pass almost every waking hour in a struggle for bread. "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" may be laws to which the deductive method of Aristotle or the inductive method of Bacon may bring your philosopher for rules of action, but what knowledge of those rules can be acquired through philosophic reasoning by those of us who are bound to the ever-revolving wheel of unceasing toil?

Will your philosophers come and teach us? A doubtful proposition — but grant it. Ah, in so doing you simply substitute one order of priests for another — a philosophic in lieu

of a theologic priesthood; and your hated order of priest and preacher will still remain! And what if some man who in the opinion of the masses is wiser than your philosopher shall some day come and say the new priesthood are hypocrites and sponges all? Who shall say him nay? Where is your arbiter? Let us destroy the Bible and annihilate among men all consciousness of God, and I will grant you we may do well enough, we and our children, and perhaps our children's children. The moral impetus given by Christianity to civilization might, and doubtless would, be projected on into the next fifty or seventy-five years. But what then? Grant that our philosophers will hold their self-taught code of morals; but remember that the millions, your children and your children's children, will have no God—no Bible—no Religion.

And right here let us have no self-decep-

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tion. The millions were hewers of wood yesterday, as many millions are hewers of wood to-day, and as many millions more will be hewers of wood to-morrow. Genius and learning and talents are not inheritable, and wealth rarely reaches its second generation. While storm and flood and pestilence shall come and go, while improvidence and disease and calamity in all its myriad forms beset the paths of the human race, the millions will still be hewers of wood. The children prattling now around the knee of philosopher and millionaire will go down into the depths to struggle up again or die as toilers. It is one of the saddest facts in human history. Build as you will, accumulate as you may, struggle as only strong and true men can struggle for those they hold dear, yet to this complexion it must come at last; there are but one or two coffins, one or two little grass-covered

mounds of earth, between luxury and toil. Call it fate, call it God's curse in Eden, call it what you will : it is an inexorable fact.

And let us not deceive ourselves in another view. Let not the increase of national wealth, the growth of colleges and schools, and the progress of scientific thought, flatter us with the fancy that while all these change labor in kind they change it also in degree. Grant that eight-hour laws, steam engines, and telegraphs, may shorten a day's labor ; yet all the more intense does that labor become, and all the more of rest must follow.

Then once more I ask you, what of the millions — what of the people — what of your children's children, with no consciousness of God, and robbed by infidelity of the simple but sublime creed of Bible-taught morality ?

Do you ask me now for an application of all this to the question of civil government ?

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Then I ask you, does not all history teach you that "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" are laws written in the hearts of the people long before they are ever written on the pages of our statute books? Do you not know that if those laws were not in the hearts of the people—not alone in the hearts of your philosophers, but in the hearts of the people—they would not be on the pages of our statutes, and when they are erased from the hearts of the people they will be erased from the statutes? Remember that all legislation, be the government free or despotic, is in its last results the will of the people. Here an election announces that will; yonder it requires a revolution; but in the end, in all governments, the voice of the law is the voice of the people. Oh, the power, the terrible power, of the people! Before the people, thrones and empires are baubles, and govern-

ments and armies are pygmies and playthings. Arouse the people, and the warnings of philosophers are heeded as little as the notes of the strange birds that fly before the tempest are heeded by the storm king! I appeal to you as the champion of no sect, the representative of no denomination, the exponent of no creed—but as a business man, as a citizen, and I believe as a patriot; and in the name of all history I implore you to remember that the only power that can restrain and safely guide ourselves and the millions is the unseen but mighty power of “**THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY.**”

While universal infidelity must work ruin to all civil government, yet it is peculiarly true of a republic, where the relations of the people to the government are so direct and immediate. Here universal infidelity means in its first results an armed centralization.

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Why? Because a people without a God must have a bayonet. Social order with Atheism is a paradox, unless grounded on Gatling guns and repeating rifles. Remove the restraints of religion, and you must immediately strengthen the arm of the civil power for your own protection. The church is to-day the great conservator of the peace. There is more power for the public safety in the whispered utterances of a God-fearing priest or preacher than in all your batteries and iron-clads.

I repeat, universal infidelity means centralization, centralization means despotism, despotism means ultimate revolution; and once let revolution come, and let there be in the minds of fifty millions of people no God, and —well, the French people saw such a sight once, and though it is near a hundred years ago, civilization shudders as it recalls the

time when Ingersollism ruled France. Ingersoll may be, in truth is—and as an Illinoisan I have said it East and West with pride—a patriot; but Ingersollism is high treason to all civil government, and high treason to all civil law.

Consider now the second element in our trinity—Property.

The very highest point that Infidelity can reach here is the time-worn maxim, “Honesty is the best policy.” That maxim, it is true, is the result of observation and experience, and may indeed be confirmed by a process of philosophic reasoning. But what conception of honesty shall the man have, young or old, whose observation and experience are not wide enough to teach him that honesty *is* the best policy? I ask you as business men, is it that maxim, or is it the training and influence, remote or direct, of Bible-

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taught fathers and mothers, that give you to-day a trustworthy class of young employés, clerks, salesmen, messengers and all? Which commands your confidence to-day, a young man's character founded on philosophy based upon his reason, observation, and experience, or a young man's character based upon a conscience? Infidelity, then, is a crime against business and against trade.

Ingersoll annihilates conscience. If Herbert Spencer, with all his ethical data, fails to find a sure foundation for conscience, what foundation is left among the sweeping negations of Ingersollism? Commerce without conscience is a vampire. Gambling is a fine art with conscience left out. Conscience makes bank stock marketable. Confidence and conscience are synonyms in the world of trade. Infidel philosophy may originate a few wise maxims, but it can never give

energy, form, and vitality to that soul of business—an honest conscience.

And once more, you who come from counting-room and store-room, remember just here the millions upon whose broad shoulders rest your countless enterprises, and whose strong arms produce and exchange all your objects of trade. Take away from them the thought that you and they stand equal in the sight of God, a thought given to them alone by Christianity; take away from yourselves the thought that they are your equals in the sight of God; take away from them the feeling of brotherhood, a feeling given to them alone by the Ideal One; leave to the toiling millions naught but a toiler's life and a toiler's grave, with no reckoning beyond, where the uneven things of this most uneven world may at last be set even;—go forth with Ingersoll and write upon the gates of

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your cities, "There is no God," and proclaim from the walls that "Death is an eternal sleep ;"—in a word, kill, burn out, annihilate conscience, all the way down to the nethermost stratum of humanity, and woe—woe betide your comprehensive schemes of enterprise, and woe betide your every accumulation of wealth ! Where is the power in this land of ours that shall then stay that beetle-browed hag, infidelity's twin sister in every age and in every land, infidelity's twin sister to-day in St. Louis, Chicago, Cincinnati, and New York, where—it may not be all a dream —under her foul incantations there is gathering a storm that may some day rend the earth beneath your feet like an earthquake—infidelity's twin sister upon every page of human history—the commune ? Is there no significance for American business men in the fact that but a little while ago a few

thousand honest but misguided laborers, incited in some of our principal cities by French, German, and American infidel communists, made every business man in the land cry out for a stronger government? I do not say that every infidel is a communist; but I do say, and say it deliberately, that from the British line to the waters of the gulf, from ocean to ocean, in every city of our land, the avowed communistic leaders as a class are Godless infidels. By the light of Pittsburgh's conflagration I can see Ingersoll's legend, "Religion is superstition," floating in the night over the heads of a frenzied mob.

And now consider the third element in our trinity—Home.

Government and law, and commerce and trade, are seemingly distinct from the idea

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of Home; and yet all lines leading from all that we have said centre in Home. Recollect that the Ingersoll creed, "Happiness in this life," is our creed too. Yes, we dig canals, hew down forests, overset our prairies, build cities, operate railroads, network with telegraph wire the continent, and with an Atlantic cable turn the ocean depths into a whispering gallery for the nations—all that we may be happy. But who? What *we*? Infidelity says the strong and self-reliant. It must of necessity say the strong and self-reliant. Infidelity, in proclaiming happiness, has no word of comfort for a weak old man or an aged woman.

Infidelity would stagger like a drunkard if chosen for a pall-bearer. It would stammer like a witless inmate of an asylum if asked to frame an epitaph for a baby's grave.

For neither childhood nor motherhood, for

neither the marriage altar nor the cradle, for neither old age nor the death bed, has Infidelity one word in its vaunted creed of "Happiness." Hence I say Infidelity can claim to furnish "Happiness" only to the strong and self-reliant—and yet that claim is as false as a new-coined lie!

Why, not one man in a thousand has wrought for his own happiness alone. His household—be it composed of wife and child or of mother or sister, in some form or other, be the roof-tree his own or a borrowed tree—the household is the pivot around which turns the whole existence of civilized man. Upon the household altar he lays his accumulations, and the happiness of the household is the direct object of civilized man. Through its happiness he seeks his. A nation of happy homes is the brightest dream of statesmanship.

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Am I indulging in sentiment, or am I not stating a plain every-day fact, when I tell you that your happiness depends in a full degree upon the happiness of mother, wife, sister, child, household? Let us dwell a moment on those words, Home and Household. They represent and encircle nearly all there is of life to much more than half the civilized world. Look behind the veil which that word Home lets fall every morning between our business world and the household, and we see clustering about the hearthstones of rich and poor, many faithful wives and mothers and cradles; many millions of ungrown men and women, unused as yet to the world and its devious ways; millions worn by labor and disease; and millions more chilled by the snow-drifts of age, waiting for the end of life. Of such are our households, and for these households civilized man goes forth at morn and returns at night.



Now, bear in mind the question that infidelity presents is not, Shall we give to these households of ours the hopes, promises, and influences of religion? but the question infidelity presents here, in the afternoon of the nineteenth century, is, Shall we take away from our homes, from our ungrown millions, from our aged and helpless ones, the promises and influences of religion? Ingersoll says—Aye, aye; let fall upon every household in the land, upon every child lisping its first prayer, upon every marriage altar, upon every death bed, and upon all the hallowed associations of Home, let fall the black pall of Atheism!—and I say, he surely does not comprehend the effect of his teachings upon human happiness, or his cruelty is unutterable and his malevolence unspeakable. This one phase of Ingersollism is enough to array against it all the forces of civilized society. When I

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think of the bearings his teachings have upon our hearthstone life, and then reflect that it is a man with cultured brain and generous and sympathetic heart who in the name of human happiness proclaims these teachings, I cannot but conclude that either he plays a part, trips in his speech, or is upon this subject stark mad.

Take one of a thousand things we think of when we imagine that his teachings are, in order to make us happier, installed at our homes in lieu of religion's hopes and promises. Take the hour—and to every household such hours must come—when the shadow of death lies upon the hearthstone. In that hour, go home, business man, seat yourself beside the coffin that holds your treasure—perchance a treasure that a day or two before hung lovingly about your knees and sung childish songs, or perchance a treasure

that through most of a lifetime had been not only bone and flesh of your bone and flesh, but heart of your very heart—seat yourself beside the coffin that holds that treasure, read Ingersoll's lectures there, and be comforted! If you think Ingersollism means happiness for your household, go and gather that household about a new-made grave that holds the family jewel, and invoke the aid of Ingersollism then! Why, that tenderness of feeling upon which the household is based, which makes the household a possibility, and without which the household could not exist as a factor in society, must be eradicated from the human heart, or Ingersollism forever remain the most monstrous of parodies, the grimmest of sarcasms, when named as a rule of happiness in the household.

These considerations—waiving a thousand others—make it unnecessary for us to fur-

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ther pursue the relations of Ingersollism to the household.

And now, then, as rational men we have glanced at the foundation thought upon which all religion rests, the existence of God; as moral men we have seen the God-given ideal and God-given book; as citizens we have seen that religion is one of the surest props of civil government and civil law; as business men we have seen that we cannot dispense with its influence; and as social beings we have found it a household blessing. The question, therefore, with which I began —Ought we, upon the score of political economy, to keep up the church?—is answered now by another and a greater question: How can we, as citizens and as business men, afford to dispense with the power and the influence of the church? To this, every citizen and

business man must answer : We cannot afford to lose the church.

I have said to you that we so often find vice wrapped in the garb of religion that we are coming to lend willing ears to attacks upon Christianity. This leads me to remark two things of Ingersoll, both of which conspire, in my judgment, to make his advent into this field a public blessing. First, he forces the issue between Infidelity and Religion. There is something vague and intangible in the underground movements of our dilettante moralists and sceptical scientists. But here is a foeman who comes squarely up to the work in his bold assaults upon Religion. As a man of the world, he assails the cherished beliefs of millions ; and men of the world will come to the combat he invites. The result may be looked for without fear or

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trembling. The truth will triumph, and in the end be mightier in withstanding a new assault, mightier in winning a new victory, and mightier in gaining new allies.

The second and greater good he will indirectly accomplish will be in preparing the way for arraying against hypocrisy in the church all the better elements of society. It cannot be denied that the performances of so many professed Christians fall so far below their pretensions to superior morality that they thereby furnish to infidelity its most effective though most illogical weapons. A kiss and a betrayal is an old story in the history of Christianity. It is none the less true to-day than it was eighteen hundred years ago. Hypocrisy in the church is the Judas Iscariotism of the age. We have seen how intimately all our interests are interwoven with the maintenance of true religion.

It follows that our interests lie in the encouragement of the boldest and most effective denunciation of that hypocrisy. Let that hypocrisy be lashed through the world with a whip of scorpions; let it be scourged with the contempt of every honest man; let it be pointed at with the finger of scorn in every assemblage of men. I doubt not that crusade is coming. What will be the result? Its logical end must be the checking of infidelity. While it is one thing to denounce hypocrisy in the interest of infidelity, and another to denounce it in the interest of Christianity, yet in the end the result must be the same—the discomfiture of infidelity.

I am no dreamer here. I look ahead, but not with my eye fixed upon some Utopian condition of society in which hypocrisy and the church will be completely and forever divorced; but I do look for a time when the

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influences of Christianity which now pervade the civilized world and make honest and just men out of many who do not kneel at the altar of the church, shall, in the interest of that church, be arrayed against the Judas Iscariots of the nineteenth century. Such a crusade, I repeat, will prove a lasting good, and such a crusade, I repeat, will prove the defeat of infidelity. To my mind, hypocrisy in the church means infidelity in the church. I do not say that infidels outside the church are hypocrites, but I do say that your deliberate hypocrite inside the church is an infidel. I paraphrase the text, and say it is as true to-day as when first it was uttered, that the man who says he loves his church, and yet hates or cheats his brother, is a liar. Hold fast to the thought, then, when the apostles of infidelity come into your midst and denounce the bad men inside the church—hold

fast to the thought that hypocrisy in the church means infidelity in the church, and then let all the people say God-speed Ingersoll in scourging his own disciples !

Every precept of reason drives us irresistibly to the conclusion that the man who deliberately uses Christianity for no other purpose than as a cloak for evil deeds is necessarily an unbeliever in disguise. Let the war go on, then, until public sentiment shall brand as worse than a thief the infidel who steals the livery of Christianity, and Ingersoll's secret worshippers be dragged by the force of public opinion from the sacred altars they disgrace. It is idle to attempt to palliate the charge of hypocrisy, and it is just as idle to fear that the charge will in the end cripple the church. Our men of affairs will discern the false from the true, and their own interests will prevent their spurning the

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genuine because of the counterfeit. Infidelity cannot prevail. It destroys the best standard of truth and right in the moral world.

Have you ever thought of it—a good man is to-day, in your midst, a good man *only as he approaches the standard of Bible-taught morality!* Grant that an infidel may be a good man too—and many of them are exemplary citizens—yet it can come about, it does come about, *only by his approaching in action a standard which he repudiates in words.*

Ingersoll personally and Ingersoll theoretically are two beings as wide apart as civilization and barbarism. The world may well believe the former to be a good citizen, but it knows the latter to be a bad citizen. One of the most notorious outlaws known in the criminal annals of the West, Frank

Rande, stood not long since at the bars of his cell in St. Louis, the very impersonation of every crime in the calendar, and, with the air of a braggart, said to preachers, priests, and policemen, to throngs of men and women, “I am a Bob Ingersoll man”; *and every man and woman in the land believed him.* Had this or any other criminal declared himself a religious man, every infidel in the land would have declared the man a hypocrite and his assertion false. It is no answer to tell us that perhaps in the cell adjoining his lay a man who for five-and-twenty years was prominent in the church, and was at last detected in a series of gigantic thefts and forgeries; for let him but step to his prison door and say, “I am a Christian man,” and all the civilized world cries out, “That man is a liar!”

Remember always that that moral sense

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which enables you to discriminate between a good man who calls himself a Christian and a bad man who calls himself a Christian is a moral sense fostered and enlightened by Christianity itself, and so far as you possess that moral sense you possess an inestimable blessing. It is the spirit of patriotism which enables you to say who was the patriot, the immortal Washington or Benedict Arnold. As citizens loving the country bequeathed to us by the men and spirit of '76, as business men striving for success by honorable endeavor, as men who love home and household, no matter whether we be in the church or out, we cannot afford to let the infidelity of Ingersoll supplant Christianity.



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THE Hon. George R. Wendling's lecture on "Ingersollism," which has been delivered in more than six hundred places, has been withdrawn from the platform to appear as a book. It undertakes to answer the arguments of Ingersoll from a secular point of view, to consider the evidence for the historic truth of Christianity as any other evidence would be considered, its influence on civilization and the results that would follow its withdrawal from human life as a motive and guide to action. It is said to have been very successful as a lecture; its style is naturally adapted to oratorical effort. In the preface the author says the largest fee he ever received for the lecture was a paragraph in the Pittsburgh *Gazette* which he quotes. It is to the effect that a young man of irreproachable character and great promise, who had been troubled with honest doubts as to the truth of Christianity, but was a sincere and candid seeker after light, had just died in that city; that on the evening a few days before his death when Mr. Wendling delivered this lecture, the young man was present and on the way home told some of his friends that he had become convinced of the truth of Christianity and should thenceforth pin his faith to that belief; and in that faith he died. There are doubtless many others in the same state of mind, assailed by doubts from which they would gladly be freed. [Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Co. Svo. Cloth. Price \$1.

















